

# ACT NO. 8301

BILL NO. 33-0137

## THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

### Regular Session

2020

An Act authorizing the Division of Economic Research of the Office of Management and Budget, the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, and the Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority to create a plan to assist the Virgin Islands in developing a sustainable blue economy within the Territory

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**WHEREAS**, the term, blue economy, is sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health;

**WHEREAS**, the blue economy concept has many diverse components, including, but not limited to, established ocean industries, such as fisheries, tourism, maritime transport, new and emerging activities, such as offshore renewable energy, aquaculture, seabed extractive activities, and maritime biotechnology and bio-prospecting;

**WHEREAS**, new and innovative economic activities are needed in the Virgin Islands to encourage economic growth;

**WHEREAS**, the blue economy concept provides social and economic benefits for current and future generations by contributing to food security, poverty eradication, improved livelihoods, income, employment, health and safety, and political stability;

**WHEREAS**, the blue economy concept restores, protects, and maintains the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions, and value of marine ecosystems;

**WHEREAS**, the blue economy concept is based on clean technologies, renewable energy, and circular material flows;

**WHEREAS**, the blue economy concept is governed by public and private processes;

**WHEREAS**, by implementing the blue economy concept, many new businesses have the potential to open in the territory, including, but not limited to fisheries, secondary fisheries, seafood trade, trade of non-edible seafood products, aquaculture, marine biotechnology and bio-prospecting, seabed mining, extraction of energy sources, freshwater generation, generation of

off-shore renewable energy, shipping and shipbuilding, maritime transport, ports and related services, national planning authorities, national tourism authorities, blue carbon, habitat protection, solid waste management, and protection of species; and Now, Therefore,

***Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

**SECTION 1.** The Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources with the cooperation and assistance of the Division of Economic Research of the Office of Management and Budget and the Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority shall create a plan to assist the Virgin Islands in developing a sustainable blue economy within the territory. At minimum, the plan must examine and include the following:


- (1) The economic viability of a blue economy concept in the Virgin Islands;
- (2) The financial needs for implementation of a blue economy in the Virgin Islands;
- (3) The potential business opportunities as a direct or indirect result of implementing a blue economy concept;
- (4) The steps needed to develop the current Virgin Islands economy into a blue economy;
- (5) The assistance, if any, that will be required of the Government of the Virgin Islands to implement a blue economy concept; and
- (6) The application to and assistance of any federal funding to assist with the implementation and development of the plan.


**SECTION 2.** The plan authorized by section 1 of this act must be completed and submitted to the appropriate committee of the Legislature. not later than one year after the date of enactment of this act.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on May 7, 2020.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 8<sup>th</sup> day of May, A.D., 2020.



  
Novelle E. Francis, Jr.  
President

  
Alicia V. Barnes  
Legislative Secretary



**Bill No. 33-0137 is hereby approved.**

**Witness my hand and the seal of the Government of  
the United States Virgin Islands at Charlotte Amalie,  
St. Thomas, this 19<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020 A.D.**

  
**Albert Bryan, Jr.**  
**Governor**